IOM REGIONAL STRATEGY: SOUTH AMERICA

I. INTRODUCTION

This Regional Strategy provides a strategic framework for responding to the particular challenges and opportunities of migration in South America. By identifying emerging issues and priorities for action, as well as synergies between activities, it aims to provide a vision to guide IOM, its Member States and other partners in program development and implementation.

II. MIGRATION IN SOUTH AMERICA

There have been significant changes in the flows within South America in the last decade:

- The increase of emigration to other regions;
- The increase in extra-regional immigration;
- A moderate but sustained increase in intra-regional mobility;
- Urbanization and feminization of migration flows; and
- Increasing movements towards the Southern Cone.

South America is made up of countries of origin, destination and of transit.

Some of the main trends can be highlighted as following:

- Argentina, Chile and Brazil are currently the South American countries that attract the most significant amounts of regional migration.
- Bolivia, Colombia, Ecuador, Paraguay, Peru and Uruguay are mainly emigration countries.
- Brazil remains the main recipient of migration from outside the continent, from Japan, USA, UK, and Portugal.
- Extra regional emigration from the region is mainly to the US and Europe (predominately to Spain).
The International Organization for Migration is the principal intergovernmental organization for migration.

As of 2013, the International Organization for Migration has 151 Member States and 12 observer states.

IOM works in the four broad areas of migration management:

- Migration and development
- Facilitating migration
- Regulating Migration
- Addressing forced migration

Cross-cutting activities include the promotion of international migration law, policy debate and guidance, protection of migrants’ rights, migration health and the gender dimension of migration.

The International Organization for Migration for Migration in South America comprises of 10 countries including:

- Argentina
- Brazil
- Bolivia
- Colombia
- Chile
- Ecuador
- Paraguay
- Uruguay
- Venezuela

The Regional office, which provides oversight and technical assistance for South America, is based in Buenos Aires, Argentina.

- There are currently 130 active projects under active implementation in the region.
- More than 2,000 people work for IOM in the region, with the IOM mission in Colombia representing the largest mission in the region.
IV. IOM: STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES

There are five key areas in which IOM in South America has defined its key objectives:

1) The promotion of migration management in the region;
2) The promotion of free movement of persons within the context of regional integration;
3) Maximizing the benefits of migration to development in particular in the context of regional integration;
4) Promotion understanding regarding migration, environment and climate change;
5) Provision of assistance to governments and other counterparts in the event of complex emergencies.

An addition to these strategic objectives, outlined below, the sixth key objective of IOM in South America is to develop and consolidate partnerships, promote dialogue and research, to further an understanding of migration in the region.

In this regard, IOM will continue support the advances undertaken in the South American Conference on Migration which is the key Regional Consultative Process on Migration in South America, in particular in the implementation of the South American Plan for Human Development of Migration, to expand and consolidate its research capacities, in particular in emerging areas, and develop and expand partnerships with governments, civil society, and the private sector.

Migration Management

- Support the strengthening of government and civil society partners’ capacities of promote and protect the human rights of migrants in situations of vulnerability.
- Support and develop the capacity of governments and civil society to protect and provide integral care for migrant victims of all forms of exploitation and violence, in particular trafficking in persons, as well as to prevent and prosecute these crimes.
- Contribute with state mechanisms for assisted voluntary return and reintegration of migrants who wish to return home but are unable to do so on their own, including irregular migrants, stranded migrants, unaccompanied child migrants and victims of trafficking or other forms of violence.
- Contribute to physical, mental and social well-being of migrants through promotion of evidence-based policies and comprehensive, integrated services for migrants and their communities which are accessible and equitable throughout all phases of the migration process.

Free Movement of Persons within the Context of Regional Integration (MERCOSUR, CAN and UNASUR)

- Provide technical assistance and assist governments in implementing regional agreements aimed at contributing to the free movement or movement of persons, or residency as applicable, including the establishment of adequate public policies, to ensure a framework of full respect for human rights of migrants and their families.
- To assist in efforts to ensure access and benefits to migrant population of programs and services in the area of migration, offered by governments in the region under various regional integration agreements, and compliance by of migrants of associated duties.
The Contribution of Migrants to Development and Regional Integration

- Contribute to regional efforts to maximize the development benefits of emigration and immigration, and promote actions that encourage the use of social, economic, and cultural resources to be used for development purposes.
- Strengthen the capacities of governments in the region to optimize the benefits of labour migration, and protect migrant workers in both countries of origin and destination, so as to mitigate the negative impacts of migration processes (such as brain drain).
- Work with civil society and migrant associations abroad to support migrants and to promote their and active participation in government programmes in issues of migration and development, labour migration, including information provision and sensitization activities.

Migration and Environment and Climate change.

- Strengthen the capacity of regional actors to research the relationship between climate change, migration, natural disasters, and gradual environmental degradation.
- Contribute to the efforts of governments and other actors to integrate migration as a possible adaptation strategy in national and local development plans, and to implement actions to reduce the risks caused by natural disasters.
- Guarantee assistance and protection to persons affected by climate change, provide assistance to populations who are displaced as a result of natural disasters and climate change and reduce the vulnerabilities of populations exposed to environmental risk factors.

Emergencies/Transitions

- Provide effective and efficient humanitarian response in situations where displaced people are forced to seek shelter in camps or temporary situations of a similar nature, ensuring respect for human rights and welfare of these people.
- Establish measures to prevent or mitigate risks according to the assigned role of IOM for example as leader of the CCCM.